

Press Release

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Arthur East Receives Most Valuable JWOD Liaison Award

Arlington, VA – Arthur East was honored today by the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled (Committee) for his two-year term as the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Program liaison. Providing jobs to more than 46,000 people who are blind or have other severe disabilities, the JWOD Program is the single largest source of employment for people who are blind or have other severe disabilities in the United States. This award recognizes JWOD liaisons' significant contributions in creating employment opportunities for people who are blind or have other severe disabilities within their respective Federal agencies. JWOD liaisons are the front line, providing the Committee, National Industries for the Blind, NISH (serving people with a range of severe disabilities), and JWOD-participating nonprofit agencies with procurement news and information from their agencies. Liaisons also disseminate JWOD information throughout their organizations.

"Arthur's efforts have helped individuals who are blind or have other severe disabilities to continue to have stable, meaningful employment," said Andrew Houghton, Committee Chairperson.

Mr. East is the Chief of Business Development & Marketing at the VA. From 2004 through 2005, he provided outstanding support for the JWOD Program in a variety of ways. Particularly noteworthy is his facilitation of continued JWOD participation in several innovative Federal contracting programs including transcription services, internment flag manufacturing, and exam gloves standardization. He coordinated two consecutive VA-JWOD Vendor Day events during October's National Disability Employee Awareness Month. And in so doing, he increased awareness of the JWOD Program by providing VA customers with the opportunity to interact with JWOD-participating nonprofit agencies and learn more about their capabilities. Furthermore, Mr. East ensured continued dissemination of the "JWOD Means Jobs" electronic publication to VA's acquisition community. Lastly, Arthur worked diligently to assist VA leadership in filling the then-vacant VA Committee member position.

The Most Valuable Liaison Award was presented at the Committee meeting.

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The Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled is an independent Federal agency that administers the JWOD Program, which creates

employment opportunities for persons who are blind or have other severe disabilities. The Committee's primary means of achieving its employment goal is through orchestrating Government purchases of supplies and services from nonprofit agencies employing such individuals.

National Industries for the Blind is one of the two national, nonprofit organizations designated by the Committee to assist in the implementation of the JWOD Program. Together with NISH, which serves people with a range of disabilities, these two agencies assist over 600 community-based nonprofit agencies participate in the JWOD Program.